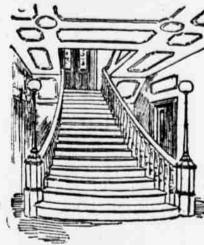
AN OLD-TIME CITY HOUSE, THE RAY MANSION, BUILT IN CHRIS RA FILLAGE FIFTY YBARS AGO,

New Being Demaltched to Make Room for One of the Great Modern Pigeon-hote Bwellings-Its Very Spactons Comforts. The old Ray mansion, which has stood for half a century in Chelsen Village, on the spot which our city maps now call the corner of Ninth avenue and Twenty-eighth street, is soon to be torn down to make room for one of those modern steam-heated, electric-lighted piles of pigeon-holes which real estate agents are pleased to call apartment bouses. The interfor of the building has already been disemantled, and the outer walls are covered with signs that advertise the sale of second-hand building materials. The stone aldewalk has been torn up, the window blinds are closed, and the once comfortable old house now has an appearance of melancholy and solftude which is aggravated by the single thin column



The mansion was put up by Robert Ray on what was then the Ray farm, a country place of some forty acres, that belonged to Cornellus Bay. This farm extended then from Eighth avenue to the North River, and from Twentyseventh street to Thirtieth street, but in those days the high-water mark was at a line drawn about 300 feet west of Tenth avenue.

There was an elevation on the Ray farm, a little east of where the mansion now stands, which was known as Strawberry Hill, and when the Rays decided to build in that neighborhood they obtained grants from the city to dig away the hill and dump the earth into the giver. In this way they extended their property as far as the present high-water mark west of Twelfth avenue. Recently the city has been making improvements along the water front, and bulkheads have cut away some of this part of the estate. But the heirs have sued the city on the old grants, and judgments for about \$120,000 have been obtained.



THE MAIN STAIRCASE.

Sobert Bay lived at 17 Broadway-the old house on Bowling Green with the two lions in front of it-before he built in Chelsen, but this house was burned down in the early forties, and Mr. Ray then decided on the location of the present mansion. It was constructed with a view to giving large entertainments, and all the pariors are arranged so that they can be thrown open for the reception of several hun-

Robert Ray died in 1879, and the house then passed into the possession of his daughter Natalie, Mrs. E. N. Baylles. Mrs. Baylles occupled the house until May last, when she decided to move up town, and she is now building a house at Fifth avenue and Seventy-It is a rare occurrence in this city for only

two owners to live in one house during a period of fifty years. Although the house is not so very old, it is built on the old-fashioned ideas of comfort. Between the inner and outer doors at the main entrance there is a small



THE BAY MANSION.

-floored hallway, and on the walls at each side of the inner door are the coat-of-arms andcreat of the Ray family. This hallway opens into a large corridor from which a broad wooden staircase ascends to the scond floor. This staircase is about twelve feet wide at the bottom and eight feet wide at the top. It Pises easily and turns in two sections to the landing into which open all the pariors and reception rooms on the main floor.

The dining room is at the right of the main

staircase on the ground floor and is large enough to accommodate thirty or forty guests, The floor is of hard wood and the ceiling is panelled, with frescoes in each of the sunken squares. There were high cupboards in the corners and a big open fireplace under the torn away now and all that is left to show what the original owners must have onjoyed are deep closels and long rows of shelves and plate warmers in the butler's pantry near by. Opposite the door is a tall French window



which opens into the conservatory. There used to be gravelled paths and a playing fountain in there, but now all this is gone and plies of brick and briskes glass litter the flower bads. The groem, which corresponds to the dining room on the other side of the staircase, is of about the same size, and was used as a reception room, but no idea of its decoration can be obtained now from the scraped walls and oracked ceiling. The rear portion of the bases on this floor was given up to the kitchen.

the mundry, storerooms, pantries, and servants' dining room, which were completely shut off from the front by a heavy wall and thick doors. Most of the doors of the house are Gothic in design, and the doorways rise to a point at the centre like eathedral arches.

The main parlor or ballroom was on the seast side of the house, at the head of the broad staircase. It is a large high-ceilinged room, with windows that look toward the porth. There were big mirrors on the freecoed walls, and candelabra reached out from the sides. Folding doors separate this room from another of equal dimensions and similar decorations, the windows of which look into Twenty-eighth street and at the little Church of the Holy Aposties across the way. Next to this room is the only apartment in the house which has not been despoiled of all ornament. It is the library, and the Gothic bookcases still s'and about the walls. There is room on the shelves for several thousand volumes. This is a small room with but one window—a stained glass window—under which there used to be an open fireplace. The flooring is of hardwood, and the ceiling is feithle, with quaint suches and pendants and frescoes. Queer faces look out from behind mock sculptures, and the cost of arms is figured on the wall shove the bookcases.

There are several other large rooms on this floor, and one dwelling room, but most of the family sleeping apartments were on the floor above. The chief of these corresponds with the north parior on the floor below, and the walls are covered with paper in imitation of old Dutch tapestries. The other beirooms are not so elaborately decorated, but every one has an open fireplace, plenty of light, and all the closet room that the most particular housewife could wish for. The single bathroom of the house is on this floor.

One flight above are the servant's rooms, the storerooms, and a large, well-lighted room which may have been used as the nursery.

A DRUNKARD'S HISTORY.

Eleven Tears of It Fatthfully Recorded on His Little Notehed Silek,

This is the record of Michael O'Leary. drunkard, loafer, and tramp, as notehed in a bit of stick by himself and told to a Sun reporter while Michael was waiting in the ante-room of a police court for arraignment. As he stood there leaning wearily against the wall, nervously fingering his wooden bit of personal history, he was an object to attract notice.

A man 50 years old, with gray hair, a wrinkled, good-natured, shasp face, deep set eyes, generally half closed, a high nasal voice, rising abruptly at the close of each sentence as if he expected that somebody was going to contradict him and proposed to make trouble if any one did, and a manner of preternatural gravity, the heritage of his previous day's de-bauch; such was the man who gave his unique autobiography to the reporter.

'Nineteen times to the Island in 'leven year. Nineteen times in 'leven year, an' every time for six months. To-day'll be the even twenty, an' that'll be six months, too. An' me who might'a' been a eddicated man, makin' laws instid of breakin' 'em. There it is all on my little notch stick, cut in good and deep to remember by. That's the record of Mike O'Leary-Old Mike wot has give the po-lice many a good racket in his time. Man an' boy I've been the roun's of the stations an' courts, but it wasn't till 'long in '83 that I took up a votin' residence on Blackwell's Island. It's all on my little notch stick here, 'leven years of it." Mr. O'Leary held up his stick and examined it carefully. Then he put his thumb in the first notch, and continued:

Notch number one. That was a bird, that drunk was. I got it New Year's Day, 1883, an' I kept it up for two weeks. I was a mechanic then an' had money, but I ain't worked since. After I'd been jagged for two weeks I got into Harlem Court one mornin' before the Judge came an' went to sleep in his chair. It took three cous an' the two scrub women to get me out, an' there wasn't much left of the Judge's chair when we got through. He sat in a ordinary every-day came chair an' sent me to the Island for six months. That's what that notch

"That saved me the trouble of swearin' off.
I got kinder acquainted over to the Island an used to the place, an' when I got out in the summer I felt homesick, so I went on the brace, an' some sucker give me a dollar. I slep' soper that night in the Chatham square lodgin'. Next day it was hot-spiced rum an' night whisker an' a jag that lasted over night. Then I went to roost in the gutter an' woke up in the Oak street station. It was six months an' a game of talk from the Judge thrown in free. That's what that nick in the stick means with a big D an' a' opposite. That D means drunk an' the 3 is for the days I was out. Then them two notehes next is drunks, too. One I was out four days, an' the other two.

"Next time I got out I didn't searcely get a smell of air, for jus' as I climbed out the boat I struck some old pals, an' we went to a gin mill close by to celebrate. I was in the jug before night, 'cause I started out to swim back to the Island, an' tried to lick two cops wot pulled me out an' then pulled me in. Six months for that, an after that a vacation of near a week. For six days I was sober as the Judge that sent me up, then I was in the han's of my frien's, an' then in the han's of the police. That wasn't nothin' new, an after I'd served out my term I got the twin of it after bein' out two days an' a night. That's all in them notches. Them is all drunks. I hit a new line next time. M'llcious mischief, they called it, but I don't see nothin' so m'licious in 'That saved me the trouble of swearin' off.

them notches. Them is all drunks. Ihit a new line next time. M'licious mischieft, they called it, but I don't see nothin' so m'licious in throwin' a rock over your head an havin' it go through a plate glass winder. The Judge did, though. He seen it for six months on my 'count, an' that when I told him I'd only been out for one day. He said it didn't make no difference. That made me hot. I said when I'g ot out I'd be solver, an' and for I was for the more after I. got out. One full year with never a bail. That's wot that long line cut in opposite that ninth notch means. I was up the Natae workin' on a farm then. I'd a' been there yet on'y they gave me a vacation. I came to the city, ac 'my frien's found me. That settled me. Another sizer for gettin drunk an' half stillin' a large because he wouldn't let me warm my feet in his peanut roaster. I'd got the hang of stickin' it out then, an' but That's four months solver, an' it's the last filme! beat a week. Brunk an' discretify, that charge was.

I was out near seven days after that, but I was drunk all the time. That wasn't what they sent me up for, though. It was for carryin' a concealed weepon. See that little carvin' o' a pistol opposite that 'eventh notch? That's him. But there wasn't nothin' concealed about that weepon. Not on your life. I was wayin' it your my reast an' coldification in that tried to say anything to me think he was a sleve. Say, I was a drawin' card for one-half hour, but I got dizzy an' dropped the gun an' they nabbed me. After the six months i got for that I was a free an' equil elities of reword as, You can months. Historderly conduc' was the charge. A feller that I used to know had turned me down when I at him the price of a drink. I was half larged then, an' I went out on the corner an cussed every man, woman, an' child in the United States black and hise with me.

Noted &c. 10. That's next, an' I come word with a was after that I was a free manife, and will have a large with the pulse that of my getter has one of the same and the word

NEW JERSEY'S SKUNK FARM.

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Mesers. Klotz & Ackley of Hackettstown are butchers, and they own a farm of some 165 seres on the other side of the Morris Canal, about a mile from the village. Their slaughter house is on the farm, and the refuse from this has hitherto been used for fattening hogs. When Mr. Ackley conceived the idea of going into the skunk business, however, he found that the slaughter house refuse could be profitably used to feed the skunks, and that the revenue from the latter, if the venture was at all suc-cessful, would be much greater than that de-rived from the sale of the hogs. So he talked the matter over with Mr. Klotz, his partner, and they decided to establish a skunk farm.



When this decision became known in the village there was at first much merriment as the expense of the butchers, but this gradually gave place to doubt in the minds of the farmers whose houses are near to the Ackley farm as to the desirability of having such an establishment in their neighborhood. But Mr. Ackley said he had a right to raise any stock he chose on his own land, and forthwith announced that he would pay a round price per head for skunks. The more distant farmers, with an eye to business, appreciated the opportunity, and set about making traps and digging holes for the capture of the animals. Just beyond the siaughter house on Mr. Ackley's farm there is a hillock which is so full of stones and stumps that it is unfit for cultivation. The barren area is of about forty acres in extent, the top of the hill being covered with strangly trees, and as far as farming purposes are concerned the piece of property is valueless. But it is the ideal location for a skunk farm, as skunks are carnivorous and care nothing for vegetation, and live in holes in the ground. Consequently this hillock was decided upon as a place to establish the ranch.



The first ithing to do, of course, was to put up a fence around the proposed farm, but as it would require a great deal of fence to surround so large an area and as winter was rapidly coming on, Mr. Ackier decided to bearin his skunk breeding on a two-acre piot and to fence in the entire forty acres next spring. Consequently a ditch three feet deep was dug around these two acres, which are situated on one of the alopes of the hillock between the sisuabiter house and the canal, and posts were set in the ditch ten or twelve feet apart. A wire netting, reaching down three feet into the ground, was nailed to the posts and the ditch was filled in. The netring was placed there to prevent the animals from digging their way out of the enclosure. Above the netting, which protruded a few inches from the surface, a solid board fence four feet high was built, with the top board nailed on obliquely so as to make it impossible for the skunks to climb over. It took about a month to complete these arrangements, and than a nimber of holes were dug in the hillside so that the skunks would find suitable accommodations on their arrival, as skunks are as a rule too lary lodg holes, preferring to appropriate the burrows of ground hogs or rabbits.

As soon as the farm was completed farmers began to come in from all around with skunks of assorted sizes in beast and hoxes. Mr. Ackiey paid from \$1 to \$1.00 a head for the animals and turned them loose in his enciosure. He now has about a hundred grunks in the pen. The animals never show themselves in the daytime, and only come out of their holes in inference of the enclosure. He now has about a hundred grunks in the pen. The animals never show themselves in the daytime, and only come out of their holes in his daytime, and only come out of their holes in his day to the hillside in a small plot which is fenced of from the rest of the enclosure by boards about eight orten inches high. Mr. Ackier says that he has partitioned off this dining room so that the saminals cannot drag any of the we

and Mr. O'Thorone Base to a live representation of the control of

UN. SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1988

AN EXPERIENCE MEXICAL

The state of the